

# The Sun

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## THE RIGHTS OF CONTRABAND.

Clearly Stated by a Leading American Authority on International Law.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Will you not assist in resisting the influences at Washington which are trying to limit our trade in contraband during this war? It is not a question of law, for the law is perfectly clear; it is a question of ethical prejudice. Neutrality includes neutral rights quite as much as it does neutral duties. Not since a century ago have belligerent rights been so painfully stretched. Germany violates treaties, breaks neutrality, bombards without notice, levies undue fines, exacts unusual penalties for sniping, lays mines in the high seas illegally. England makes copper and rubber absolute contraband, claims jurisdiction over the whole North Sea, extracts reservists from neutral bottoms, cuts off our direct trade with Germany without blockade. The result is ruined commerce, an emergency tax, disaster.

This is bad enough. But why should the Administration make bad worse by seeking to discourage trade in contraband which would be a partial make-weight?

The daily importances of the German Ambassador are endured apparently without remonstrance. The President forbids a large contract for submarines in sections, which are simple contraband, by our absurd construction of the statute which forbids our furnishing ships. A Senator proposes a bill to stop dealing in contraband altogether.

Why should a neutral Government prefer belligerent interests to neutral interests? It is a betrayal of trust. More than that, it is an assumption by the neutral of the belligerent duty of preventing the carriage of contraband, thus illegally taking part in the war and inevitably aiding one belligerent at the expense of the other as well as to our own cause.

THEODORE S. WOOLSEY.  
 NEW HAVEN, December 12.

## Much Has He Travelled in the Realm of Gold.

If Colonel ROOSEVELT really wrote, and in any other spirit than that of humorous self-depreciation, that the public is "tired of hearing from me," he had his answer Thursday night in the 6,000 persons who tried to crowd into a hall equal to containing a third of their number. To be sure, he was not to talk about "reforms," but was to stir up the animals in another way, his manager and entomological collection of reminiscences from his "pleasure trip" way down on the Unknown River. There are moments, sometimes there are years, when the Colonel jabs the sensibilities and treads on the toes of a good many of his countrymen. When he dons the war bonnet and reaches ruthlessly for sculps he causes consternation, especially among the Laodiceans and the political pacifists. He shrieks his war song, his moccasins are thunder stumps; there is no pipe of peace in his wigwag. It is among his reasonably long list of peculiarities that he doesn't smoke. Sometimes THE SUN, which has studied long this unique specimen of homo (or vir) politicus, has regretted that he refuses to drink the holy herb nicotine; that he denies himself this sterling sedative. There are times when the Colonel needs rest and quiet disengagement.

For, though subtle as the serpent, the Colonel is often as downright as dynamite. He was born when Mars was in the ascendant. He dearly loves a shiny. If it were legitimate to single out one element in a genealogy so elaborate as his is, especially in a campaign, we should say that the Colonel was essentially and immortally Irish, a belated figure from Celtic sagas that he knows and loves so well. There is something of CICUTIAIN and a fierce energy which recalls a very different brood of a boy, associated with CICUTIAIN by Mr. JAMES STEPHENS, O'BRIEN of the O'Brien nation and the Kingdom of Kerry, who made RHADAMANTHUS the Tormontor regret that any of the Clan of the Gael came his way. Trouble on earth, trouble in the good place, trouble in the hot place, was the business and pleasure of that ever belligerent representative of the O'Brien nation.

The Colonel has made some trouble in the Republican party and elsewhere; and he is a thorn in the flesh of all conservatives, snobs and people that like to sleep at night; but he has a double in him—there is at least a regi-

ment of Roosevelt behind those spectacles—who is as charming to everybody except a few unfavourable naturalists as the red Roosevelt is alarming to many sober householders when the razzers go flyin' through the air. ROOSEVELT, the hunter, the cowpuncher, pioneer, traveller, the indefatigable, humorous, highly educated primitive, with the heart of sixteen and a head rich in innumerable experiences of animals and other men; when this ROOSEVELT, who never slept in a house, this compound of NATTY BUMPO, DANIEL BOONE, MARCO POLO, BRUCE the traveller, GORDON-CUMMING, MAYNE REID, the professor of natural history, and Dr. LYMAN AMOTT'S immortal inquisitive relative, HOLLO—when the real out of doors ROOSEVELT comes back from the jungle, and shows his spots and mosquito bites, who shall resist him? He is a Wonder Book and a Jungle Book bound in khaki.

Fortunate were the folks who heard him tell of cannibal fishes that each other eat; of crocodile-dwarming man-eating catfish that leap from the water and pull down incautious monkeys leaping from the trees on the bank; of ants arboreal in their habits; ants that march in innumerable armies, with leaves and specimens of the Colonel's wardrobe in the knapsack, so to speak, of each fly little soldier; of scorpions that sleep in shoes; of azure butterflies as long as small sized birds; say robins, to make the image concrete; of parrot streaks and monkey chops; of gnats and wasps that buzz and sting like a Progressive minority; of rattlesnake and ten-foot bushmasters, and that excellent executioner of the snake bite the mummurra, the Brazilian snake trust, who incorporates the poison brothers in his capacious and humane midst. And even in the glow of adventures so gallantly carried and of privations borne with a grin and of observations among difficulties, an allegory lifts a lovely head:

"One insect we encountered resembled a katydid, but made a noise like a steamboat whistle."

Could even the Colonel, who has seen and heard so many specimens of it, have expected to find in Brazil this all too well known variety of the American political locust?

## Germany's Ability to Finance the War.

How will Germany carry off a long war against the two greatest financial Powers in the world, these two having—as an ally, moreover, a third nation that can put in the field more armed soldiers than any other?

In a recent speech the British Chancellor of the Exchequer declared in substance that he confidently expected Germany and Austria to fail from their inability to provide the last \$100,000,000 of "cash." But Germany is carrying on the struggle by the use of financial expedients different from any that have ever been considered practicable under similar circumstances.

What these expedients are is detailed in a very interesting article in the December number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, written by ROBERT G. USHER, the well known author of "Pan-Germanism." Professor USHER declares that the German statesmen are proceeding on the principle that money, that is cash or specie money, is essential or valuable for war purposes only in so far as it enables them to put an army into the field and sustain it there while it is winning the campaign. This implies naturally that the German people who stay at home shall be fed and taken care of, and also shall be kept employed and contented. If these things can be accomplished the German theory is that it matters little whether the quantity of real money, actual money, in the country is large or small.

Real money, so called, serves only the purpose of an exchange of value. If matters can be so arranged that an exchange of value can take place without the use of money, money is unnecessary. In the first place, therefore, if the Government has been able to carry the forces of paternalism and centralization to such breadth and accuracy that it knows every detail concerning the personal and private affairs of its citizens, just where all the resources of the country are located in every particular, and what it is necessary to provide from outside in case of war, then long in advance of the outbreak of war it was enabled to make preparations for the struggle of a kind infinitely more minute and more formidable than ever has been made in the world before.

The true financing of Pan-Germanism for the present conflict has thus, according to Professor USHER, included, to begin with, such an extraordinary and efficient organization of German private and national industry that this war cannot involve such a dislocation of industry as has in all other cases been calamitous, if not disastrous, to the countries in which it occurred.

The system of conscription used in Germany has been enforced in such a manner that a sufficient number of men has been still left to work in factories, counting houses and similar places, so that the business of the country can still be carried on.

The second step has easily been taken, and that is a complete regulation of commodity prices. This latter task has been not so difficult as it seems, because price is merely the exchange value of a commodity expressed in terms of money. Unless there is a serious deficiency in supply or an unusual increase in demand, prices ought to remain the same. With the elements of supply and demand looked after, with speculation controlled and with the German people feeling an inexhaustible confidence in the power of their Government and the success of its arms, the need of money, that is currency or specie as an exchange medium in domestic trade, is inconsiderable, because any token guaranteed by the Government can take its place.

This is the theory, and it is a very pretty one. Also, it must be confessed, it has worked very well up to date, just as the Government's great coffee valorization scheme in Brazil set at naught the operation of the law of supply and demand there for a couple of years.

But it remains to be seen whether the theory will work indefinitely. Except in so far as it includes an extremely methodical preparation for a war in the collection and cataloguing of German resources, we fail to observe that it involves anything more than a financing of the war through the use of the old expedient of fiat money.

Let it be supposed that at the end of six months the food supply in Germany, not having been reinforced, begins to fall short, with an unavoidable rise in its cost; that heavy losses in the field have weakened German provisions and begun to tell upon German spirits; that factories are closed because more men have been drawn from them than was calculated upon; that chances of German success in the war have become dimmed, and that the paper money which was thought to be the same as gold at the beginning of the year is universally recognized to be worth only thirty cents on a dollar, in what case then would this theory stand? The weekly statements of the Imperial Bank of Germany have been so changed of late as to be almost unintelligible, but there is no doubt at all that while the gold holdings of the bank have considerably enlarged, the bank's issue of paper money has enlarged very much more. Since the outbreak of the war the gold basis for its paper money issue has diminished decidedly; and it is because of this undoubtedly that the rate of German exchange in New York and other cities outside Germany has fallen to a point which indicates indirectly a large premium on German gold.

The Germans are trying to carry on their war practically without the help of what would be considered by ordinary standards an adequate gold reserve. It is not at all impossible that they may do so, and they have been successful in their efforts so far. It will be interesting to see if they are successful to the end.

## Wall Street Signals to Business to Go Ahead.

There were no disappointments in the reopened stock market yesterday. The hopeful expectations with which Wall Street prepared for a restoration of public trading were multiplied in the realization.

Indeed, the session developed a gratifying surprise in the volume of transactions and the course of prices. Dealings were on a much more active scale than had been predicted. Moreover, quotations rose as trading progressed, the advance being particularly sharp in a number of issues. Selling pressure was conspicuously lacking despite the apprehensions only recently entertained. What significance the stock market has for business in every department of effort is shown by comparing the first session after resumption with the last session before the long suspension made necessary by the outbreak of the European war.

On Thursday, July 30, quoted values for securities of all descriptions, bonds and stocks alike, were crashing violently downward under liquidation which was coming from the ends of the earth. There was every portent of a terrific panic and it was even doubted if closing the market would help to avert it. During the Stock Exchange suspension the financial and business world has recovered stability. Normal financial and commercial facilities have been reestablished and the stock market has opened with activity and rising prices.

Even had the fresh start of the Stock Exchange been less auspicious the ability to make it at all would have been most encouraging. The important thing was to open the market where business conditions and prospects are reflected and discounted. The very fact of the opening demonstrates that the war crisis has passed; and the fashion of the opening is of even more favorable omen.

They are shrewd forecasters down there in Wall Street, and the initial developments in the restored stock market give notice to the world that American business has something besides the war to think about.

## Saving the Flagman's Wages.

There was a violent collision between trolley cars at the intersection of Eighth avenue and Fifty-third street on Friday evening. By marvellous good fortune no one was killed, but eighteen or twenty people were injured, five of them severely. Both cars were damaged, one in particular being badly smashed. The entire surface traffic of the west central section of the city was tied up for a while and disorganized for the entire evening, to the annoyance and injury of several thousand passengers.

The accident was due to the fact that after 7:30 o'clock in the evening no flagman is kept at this crossing to control the traffic. The location is one of the busiest in the city. The cars of the Sixth avenue and Broadway lines running above Fifty-ninth street use Fifty-third street for the east and west bound section of their route. The Eighth avenue car line is one of those on which cars are run with great frequency. In addition there is very great automobile traffic up and down Eighth avenue at all hours of the evening.

Thus the crossing is one of the most important and one of the most dangerous in New York. Next after the three or four principal Broadway corners there is hardly a crossing in the city where the need for watchfulness and control is more urgent. The conditions of danger by no means end with the business hours. They continue until late at night when the cars become infrequent and pleasure riding in motor cars is reduced in volume.

It seems incredible that the responsible operating officials of the traction company should select such a place for the misguided exercise of a petty economy. The cost of a flagman would presumably be from \$1.50 to \$2 a night. The saving of such a sum at the risk of life and property shows a fatuous disregard of public safety. Even assuming that no damage suits should be

brought by the injured passengers the cost of repairing the damaged cars would probably pay the wages of the flagman for a couple of years.

Incidentally the accident demonstrated once more the great danger to the public of the new side entrance cars, whose doors open and shut only by elaborate machinery, said doors being so close together as to be both involved, as a rule, in any mishap to either. Some day the penning of a crowd in a smashed or burning car may have serious consequences.

## War Tax on Santa Claus.

Citizens who receive Christmas presents from abroad this year have a pleasant surprise in store. When they receive notification from the post office to step up and pay 35 or 54 or 93 cents duty on the pretty bagatelle which friendly remembrance inflicts on them they will at once become aware of the present Administration's latest contribution to the high cost of living. They will discover that in addition to the duty and regardless of its amount there is charged against them a "war tax" item of 25 cents for the United States Custom House entry.

The careful newspaper reader will dimly recall having noticed this item in the schedule of the "emergency" tax bill which President Wilson got through the Congress by gentle pressure in the hurried days of the close of the session. But he will, no doubt, be astonished to find that it applies to his own microscope and involuntary importation. So far as he thought of it at all, he supposed the entry fee was a small tax on large commercial transactions at the Custom House.

If, however, he makes more or less heated inquiry at the post office window an urban official will explain to him that the minimum limit is 25 cents; that is, Uncle Sam will not condescend to collect an entry tax where the prospective duty is less than the tax itself. The official will hasten to add that in many cases where there is no duty the entry tax may still be assessed. Sometimes a Custom House seagull conjectures that a duty may be chargeable. Then he makes an entry. When examination is made the duty vanishes into an official guess, but the entry is a sacred and irrevocable thing. It stands and so does the 25 cent tax. So the citizen must pay for the official blunder.

All this is splendidly logical, paternal and socially servicable. It greatly enhances the happy taxpayer's pride in his Government. But it would be interesting to know how many Congressmen understood that they were imposing a pettifoggish annoyance of this sort on the man in the street when they voted for the "emergency" bill.

France suddenly bullies Germany, tells her to clear out of Morocco and to clear out sharp.—From GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S latest instalment of "Common Sense."

The Mr. SHAW exposes France, which was posing as the bullied in the Morocco affair.

It now appears, as was believed by those who knew the strength of his character, that General HUERTA never dreamed of offering his fortune and sword to aid General VILLA to restore order in Mexico. "I solemnly declare," cables VICTORIANO HUERTA from Barcelona, "that I can never have dealings with CARANZA, the four-flusher; ZAPATA, the highway robber; and VILLA, the jail-bird." As there must be a great many Mexicans at home who have precisely the same opinion of these warring Constitutionalists the prospect for peace and reconstruction is about as dark as it could be.

"Tipperary" has found friends in Secretary GIBSON and General HIGGINS. L. SCOTT, the Chief of Staff. Mr. GIBSON was not at all shocked when someone told him that a square of cavalry had maneuvered in Madison Square Garden to the air which is sung in the trenches in Flanders. The Chief of Staff says: "It is a spirited tune and a lively tune. I like it." We fancy that the opportunity of army men to have some fun at the expense of the muzzled navy is too good to be lost. The effect of the war upon Tipperary will be to make army men sing it all the more, and it will provoke the men of the navy to bawl it on leave with great gusto.

A clear gain by Emperor WILLIAM to Lord LONSDALE, and by the latter to a resident of Hambleton, has been sold at auction in London for \$72.50. The Red Cross is to be congratulated upon its good fortune, but what smokers would like to know is why LONSDALE gave away the Emperor's cheroot.

It may be well to bear in mind that there is such a thing as carrying traffic regulation so far as to make it a nuisance. It is a question whether the traffic rule which is being enforced in Fifth avenue will lead to a turn into a side street to the left to turn first to the right into the street then turn around and set into the line moving in the contrary direction in order to cross the avenue will prove a real advantage in making traffic flow. When the difficulty of turning around in the cross streets is considered, especially for large motor cars, it looks as if the new rule might cause considerable individual hardship and in the general scheme do more harm than good. The object of traffic regulation is not to create an ideal perfection of system but to keep things moving with minimum annoyance to individuals.

## The New Income Tax Blanks require the victim to specify whether he was living with his wife on December 31, 1914. Surely this is not the question. If the wife died on December 30, would the Treasury Department attempt to rob the husband of his exemption? Assuredly no court would uphold it. The statutory question is a broad one covering the entire year and not one day of it. Why does officialdom strive so hard to place a virulent construction on the laws it has to administer?

When looking into two blue eyes. When gaze straight back at you. When watching red lips curve and pout. When she could more than do? Her golden hair lay on my breast. My arm embraced her waist. Her little hand within my grasp. In confidence was placed. And I, fresh from the teacher's art. In tango and maxixe. Tread all the very latest steps. With skill that was sought. I came ducked first with whirl and dip. Then when I saw a tear. Upon my darling's cheek I chuckled. And realized the little drag. The clock struck one; the clock struck "two."

My strength was almost spent. Still through the mazes of the dance. Enthusiasm I went. Until at last, into her face I took a stealthy peep. And found, oh joy, my little babe. At last had gone to sleep.

## Change Suggested.

Jack Tar! Nay, tar is much too black. Josephus will not have it so; "purphy" becomes the word. We'll man the navy with Jack Snow!

## MUSICAL APPRECIATION.

Mr. Walter Damrosch Deplores the Lack of It in a Certain Case.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: What is wrong with our musical or rather unmusical public? Wednesday night I attended a performance of Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius," given by the Oratorio Society. The work is of ineffable beauty and I would rank the first part of this oratorio with the Mendelssohn in Beethoven's great mass and the German Requiem of Brahms. To the believing Christian, be he Catholic or Protestant, the music makes real and vital what before he may have only felt, and to him who would listen to it only as a work of art, the nobility of its themes, the refinement of workmanship in their development and the richness of the orchestration must give keenest delight and satisfaction.

The performance was of superlative merit. Never have I heard greater beauty of tone from chorus and orchestra, and the singing and playing of Mr. Elmes made the pilgrimage of the soul intensely moving and uplifting.

But instead of the fifteen hundred or so present in the case, such a master work and master performance should have drawn ten times that number. It is true that many of our very well to do are so much distracted and so much preoccupied that they cannot find time or the strength to enjoy all that is offered, or the very multiplicity of their duties prevents that concentration of mind which is the first essential for self-culture. Our very poor, on the other hand, seldom have the opportunity to acquire the fundamental education on which a proper enjoyment of the beautiful in art is based.

But how about our great middle class? I am afraid that group of the community that their duty to society is accomplished after they have contributed more or less liberally to the various charities and philanthropies of our city, and that they do not realize these duty toward themselves and the mental and spiritual development of their own souls. Alas! with so many of our musical art as an art has been cultivated, or it has been smothered at a time of life when mind and heart should be exquisitely sensitive to its ennobling influence.

It is true that there is a much larger public for symphonic music, but while such masterpieces of real inspiration as the "Dream of Gerontius" are still being withheld, this better musical art should not be allowed to decay for want of popular support.

WALTER DAMROSCH.  
 NEW YORK, December 11.

## THE MIDDLE AGES.

Called "Dark," They Are Bright With Intellectual Triumphs.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The innuendo of "E. H." back somewhere in the nineteenth century, that the "Sabbath Committee" might be less exclusively penned had taken time to consult with those who know whereof they speak when historic reference is in order. It is not only a dig into some such thoughtful book as Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler's treatise on "Philosophy" where "E. H." would learn the Columbia president's conclusion as to the Dark Age, a Middle Ages, that of medieval and scholasticism. Out-of-dateness is certainly not characteristic of the thoughtful Dr. Butler, and he has this to say:

To suppose that such an age as this the Middle Ages can properly be described as dark is only to invite attention to the limitations of one's knowledge and sympathy. No age was dark in any true sense that witnessed the growth of scholarship as the feast of Aquino and Thomas Aquinas; that saw the rise of universities, of guilds and of cities; that was fired by the enthusiasm and zeal of St. Dominic and St. Francis; that gave birth to the great drama of the Holy Grail, of the "Nightingale" and the "Divine Comedy" of Dante; that witnessed those triumphs of Gothic architecture, which still delight the eye and stir the imagination of the student of the Middle Ages; that saw the rise of universities, of guilds and of cities; that was fired by the enthusiasm and zeal of St. Dominic and St. Francis; that gave birth to the great drama of the Holy Grail, of the "Nightingale" and the "Divine Comedy" of Dante; that witnessed those triumphs of Gothic architecture, which still delight the eye and stir the imagination of the student of the Middle Ages; that saw the rise of universities, of guilds and of cities; that was fired by the enthusiasm and zeal of St. Dominic and St. Francis; 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